

From: Jacobs Robert
To: 'microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov'
Date: 1/23/02 10:10am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Sir or Madam,

I would just like to add my voice to those who object to the Microsoft Antitrust Case proposed settlement. This settlement does nothing to punish Microsoft for their anti-competitive practices. Placing a three-man oversight committee on Microsoft's premises (of which one member is selected by Microsoft and the second member is "approved" by Microsoft is in no way "punishment". How can we this committee rightly be called an "oversight committee" when Microsoft is likely to select members who are disposed to their position?)

Where are the penalties levied against Microsoft for ruthlessly bullying their opponents out of the market? Why isn't Microsoft being assessed fines from their ill-gotten gains? How is Microsoft being punished for the practices that have gotten them where they are today? If you do not punish them financially. When a child steals from the cookie jar and you tell the child "That was wrong, don't do it again...and I'll be watching you", but you don't take back the cookie, did the child learn anything? The child has not been punished and will, likely, attempt the same maneuver again as soon as your back is turned.

For a moment, I was encouraged to see that Microsoft is required to be more "open" with their specifications (application program interface (API)) -- until I read further into the settlement only to see that Microsoft could determine which APIs were critical to their business and should not be released. Have we gotten anywhere with them, then?

Microsoft deserves its bad reputation among computer industry professionals who stand for progress and innovation. Microsoft does not innovate....Microsoft stamps out competition by offering their products "bundled" or "integrated" with their operating system and then convincing hardware manufacturers to include their products.

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"...security experts don't pick on Microsoft because we have some fundamental dislike for the company. Indeed, Microsoft's poor products are one of the reasons we're in business."

-- Bruce Schneier, Founder and CTO

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